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RELATIVE SOVIET AND CHINESE INFLUENCE
IN NORTH KOREA

While the Chinese Communists have virtually occupied North Korea militarily for over two years, the Soviet Union retains primary control of North Korean affairs. There are no indications that Pyongyang has altered its allegiance to Moscow or that the Chinese Communists are challenging Soviet authority in Korea.

Prior to the war, North Korea was a typical Soviet satellite with Soviet advisers attached to important military, political and economic posts. Koreans of Soviet citizenship occupied important government posts, thus insuring the regime's loyalty to Moscow and depriving Chinese-trained Korean Communists of any real power.

Since their intervention in 1950, the Chinese Communists have increasingly participated in North Korean affairs, but always within the framework of Soviet control. China's own economic dependence upon Moscow and its lack of experience and skilled manpower necessary to control a satellite would have prevented them from supplanting Soviet influence even if they had so desired.

Various recent developments in North Korea indicate a strengthening of the Soviet faction's power. A series of purges has weakened the authority of the domestic Communist faction and

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the Chinese-trained faction has never been strong enough to challenge the Soviet-trained group. There also has been a complete reorganization of the local administrations to bring them more directly under the control of the Soviet-dominated Pyongyang government, a reorganization of the intelligence system to place it under the control of the Soviet-Korean faction, and the naming of a Soviet-Korean as a Vice Premier reportedly to replace a member of the domestic faction.

With the armistice, the Soviet Union and the Soviet faction in Korea have taken the lead in fixing Pyongyang's future course. Malenkov told Kim Il-sung on 27 July that the Soviet Union stood ready to "grant every possible aid" to North Korea in organizing its "peaceful life" and Kim has expressed his thanks to Malenkov for "the unstinting aid of the Soviet people."

A Soviet attempt to restore completely its pre-1950 control, however, may now be complicated by the fact that the Chinese have indicated their readiness to remain in Korea to assist with "reconstruction." In view of Mao's contributions to the Korean fighting, and to Moscow's probable belief that the Sino-Soviet partnership is more important than a restoration of the pre-war status in Korea, Moscow may now find it expedient to grant Peiping a greater role in North Korea than before October 1950.

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